

METROPOLITAN

School Board rejects call for districting

The refusal of the Portland School Board to honor an initiative petition filed by the Citizens for a More Representative School Board has initiated a legal debate that might well take the School District back to court—at taxpayer expense.

"Citizens" filed their petition in December of 1983, calling on the School Board to set an election to let district residents vote on their proposition dividing the School District into seven zones and requiring each member elected to live in a separate zone.

The petition action was taken under OS 331.095, which requires that, upon the filing of a petition with 1,000 signatures, the School Board must place the issue before the voters. A second law (ORS 332.128) went into effect January 1, 1984, raising the number of required signatures to 25 percent of the electorate or approximately 47,000 (nearly



CHAIR CHARLOTTE BEEMAN

as many as required for a state-wide initiative).

The attorney hired by the School Board to clarify the issue told the board that although the signatures were submitted to the County Registrar and verified before January 1st, the later law is now in effect and

takes precedence.

The Secretary of State's office, which regulates elections, disagrees. Deputy Secretary of State C. Gregory McMurdo wrote December 5th, "If your petition is filed with the County Clerk on or before Friday, December 30th, 1983, the petition will need to contain the signatures of 1,000 electors of the district, ORS 331.095. If your petition is filed after December 30, 1983, the petition will need to contain the signatures of a number of electors of the district that is not less than 25 percent of all votes cast in the district for the office of Governor at the 1983 general election." The election is to be held no sooner than 40 days after the date of its order and no later than March 26, 1985.

Lewis C. Littlehales, Counsel to the Legislature, who wrote the bill, agrees: "We conclude that because the petition was filed in December

the number of signatures required to be contained in the petition is 10 percent or at least 1,000 persons, whichever is the lesser, of the electors voting for the office of school director at the last regular district election in the district."

Because the School Board refused to accept this definition, the citizens groups will ask the Secretary of State's Office to take the responsibility of ordering the School Board to perform its duty to the voters.

The Portland School Board has long opposed districting, and, until the 1983 Legislative Session, was successful in keeping in place a law that prevented only the Portland District (cities of more than 300,000) from districting.

Board member Herb Cawthorne moved that a Board committee study the issue. He was supported by Bill Scott, who said he prefers zones, but the motion failed 5-2.

Local jazz show features record reviews

by Lanita Duke

Grassroot News, N.W.—Since June of 1983, Eugene Rashad, 29, has made the video connection with Jazz Scene, a weekly jazz show aired every Sunday on Channel 36, Rogers Cablesystems.

In the beginning, Rashad would play a record while displaying the album cover. Experience and maturity polished up the rough edges and he soon added a different dimension to the show. He said, "I started interviewing local musicians, adding video clips and jazz news."

The news is anchored by Rashad's wife, Aida. "Our sources are Bill-

board, Down Beat and USA Today. This gives our audience a perspective to measure music as an art form."

As a critic Rashad said different life experiences determine how he judges an album. "Some of my life experience is suffering. I believe that nothing gets better unless something hurts. My life has had certain setbacks because I was born a Black male in a repressive society. Living from one day to the next makes me find out what I'm made of."

"When I hear Herbie Hancock play 'Maiden Voyage,' I feel what Hancock feels. It takes me out of the realm of everyday human feel-

ings into a different threshold. It is like a different experience."

Rashad said he believes Jazz does not have the economic infrastructure of pop music. He said, "American society prevents the creative forces of Black people from coming to a head. They do this by suppressing the cash flow from coming into the studio and limiting the number of people who receive contracts."

He called the American music industry "naive." "They say that the market is in pop but jazz is America's only true art form."

Rashad is a regular fixture as one of KBOO's jazz D.J.s. But he said his experience comes from his tenure with the Nation of Islam. "I am proud to have been a part of an organization that really demonstrated love and concern for the Black peo-

ple. It left its mark on me. I feel I have something to offer while people are watching. That is the time to move—while people are watching."

For the future Rashad wants to produce a jazz version of MTV. He said, "It is the same old question. What are Black people going to do in the market they created? Will we be able to command the dollars?"

In reviewing albums Rashad looks at the instrumentation. "I played a record this Sunday that had no synthesizer or keyboard instruments. However, it sounded like it did. That is class—quality—and I like that."

Rashad invites the community to tune in every Sunday starting at 3:00.



EUGENE & AIDA RASHAD
(Photo: Richard J. Brown)

King designs sought

Design selection for the commemorative plaque at the King Neighborhood Facility will be a community effort, according to Facility coordinator Jim Loving.

The plaque, to honor slain civil rights leader Martin Luther King, Jr., will be funded by the City of Portland and Portland Public Schools.

The funding announcement was made public Jan. 10 at a facility press briefing by Supt. Matthew Prophet and City Commissioner Margaret Strachan.

Loving and Betty Walker, chair

of the facility advisory committee, announced today (Jan. 17) that members of the community have been invited to submit designs for the plaque.

Designs should be 24 inches square and appropriate for a cast bronze plaque with raised letters, Walker said.

All designs must be submitted to the King Neighborhood Facility, 4815 N.E. 7th Ave., Portland, OR 97211 before 5 p.m., Friday, February 3, 1984.

Names, addresses and phone numbers should be attached.

Harold Williams



Harold Williams

"Democrat"
Candidate for State
Representative
District 18

Martin Luther King has shown in the way he lived that a person's success is to be measured not so much by the position one has reached in life as by the obstacles which one has overcome while trying to succeed.

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Paid for by the Committee To Elect Harold Williams.
P. O. Box 6807, Portland, Oregon 97228. Paul Knauts, Treasurer.

PSU celebrates Black History Month

The Black Cultural Affairs Board at Portland State University, a student organization, has planned a series of special community events during February, Black History Month. Titled "A Celebration of Life, Culture and Achievements," the observance will feature nationally known performers and films.

To kick-off the celebration, the BCAB will once again host the Annual Gospel Festival Saturday, Jan. 28, at 7:30 p.m. in the Smith Center Ballroom. Featured will be recording artist Vanessa Bell Armstrong. Armstrong began singing gospel at the age of 4 and has appeared with some of the greatest gospel talents of today. She has performed all across the country, singing in San Francisco, New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, and many other cities, devastating her audiences with her articulate voice control and versatility.

The gospel festival will also feature local gospel artist Jo Ann Collins. Collins was raised in a holiness church and was inspired to sing at an early age. After many years of performing in the rhythm and blues area, she vowed to sing only gospel music.

This year's festival also will spotlight two local choirs: Greater Mt. Calvary Church of God in Christ, Bishop H.B. Daniels presiding; and the Ministers of Music, home choir of the Albina Church of God whose pastor is Rev. Irving.

Tickets are available at the House of Sound records, Meier & Frank



VANESSA BELL ARMSTRONG



PHILLIP E. WALKER

(downtown), and the Portland State University box office. Ticket prices are \$4 general admission and \$3.50 with valid PSU I.D. This event is co-sponsored by the Metropolitan Arts Commission.

On Wednesday, Feb. 1, at 8 p.m., also in the Smith Center Ballroom, the BCAB will present a two-hour performance by Phillip E. Walker of the African American Drama Company of San Francisco. His one-man show, "Can I Speak For You, Brother," depicts such leaders as Martin Luther King, Jr., Malcolm X, Fredrick Douglass, Haki Madhubuti (Don. L. Lee), High John da Conqueror, W.E.B. DuBois, Booker T. Washington, and Sgt. Emmanuel Stance. Tickets

are \$2.50 general admission, \$2 with valid PSU I.D. Also that same day, Walker will present a free workshop, entitled "Physical Posture and Politics," at 3:00 p.m. The location will be announced soon.

The main feature of this year's Black History Month will occur Thursday, Feb. 23, at 8 p.m., in the Smith Center Ballroom, with a rare Northwest appearance by one of the most diverse artists of our time—Gil Scott-Heron. Scott-Heron was initially published and recorded in 1970. In the fall of that year, "The Vulture," a mystery novel set against the background of urban street survival, was published simultaneously with a volume of poetry, "Small Talk at 12th and Lenox."

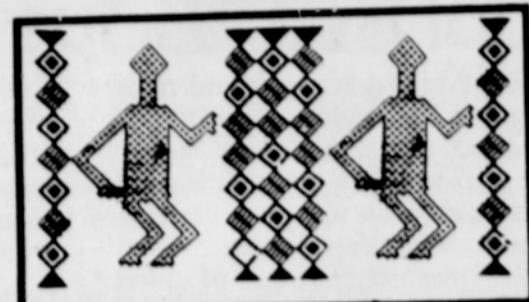
Flying Dutchman Records released a record with selections from the poetry volume and original songs played and sung by Scott-Heron who accompanied himself on piano.

It is his teaching experience and background (Johns Hopkins University and Lincoln University) as well as his artistic achievements that have contributed to the success of Scott-Heron's lecture and solo-performance appearances. The audience is presented with poetry and music, but also with the political incisiveness that created classics such as "The H2Ogate Blues," "We Beg Your Pardon, America," and "Jose Campos Torres" (a poetic response to the death of a young Mexican-American at the hands of Houston police). This will be a rare appearance you won't want to miss!

Ticket prices are \$7 general admission, \$6 with valid PSU I.D. Tickets are available at the House of Sound, Meier & Frank (downtown), and the PSU box office.

Other BCAB activities will include a Black Film Festival featuring such films as "Lorraine Hansberry: The Black Experience in the Creation of Drama," "Fund: The Story of Ella Baker," and "Generations of Resistance," focusing on the struggle to survive in South Africa. The festival will run Feb. 3 to 24, with showings every Friday at 7:30 p.m. in 75 Lincoln Hall. Admission to all films in the series will be free. This event is co-sponsored by the PSU Film Committee and the Portland State Women's Union.

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